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YEAR IN REVIEW



By Michael D. Rich, President and CEO of RAND

RAND's mission is to help improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis. Every year, we evaluate how well we are achieving our mission by asking whether we are addressing the most pressing

policy issues with the scientific rigor and objectivity that make up our core values, getting our findings to key decisionmakers and the broader public, and contributing to significant improvements in policy and practice.

The snapshots included below highlight 2012 efforts that meet all these criteria. Each began with an ambition to take on a consequential issue, each produced actionable recommendations based on rigorous research and analysis, and each involved outreach to key audiences to help ensure that the recommendations were transformed into action. Of course, the number and diversity of RAND contributions extend far beyond this handful of illustrations. But I hope you will see in these examples RAND at its best, and the role that research and analysis plays in helping individuals, communities, and nations be better off—safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous.

Michael D. Rich

We Helped the U.S. Military Save Hundreds of Millions of Dollars Annually

For decades, RAND analysts have worked with the U.S. military services and other parts of the Department of Defense (DoD) to strengthen the United States' national security capability while reducing costs. With the U.S. defense budget facing significant cuts, this work has never been more important. In 2012, analysis by RAND's federally funded research and development centers—RAND Project AIR FORCE, the RAND Arroyo Center, and the RAND National Defense Research Institute—is helping our clients achieve savings of more than \$500 million annually, with the potential for much more.

These savings came from a series of recommendations, including improving the positioning, transportation, and distribution of supplies to bases in the continental United States; shifting DoD's focus from individual logistics process management to total cost management; using Air Force aircraft rather than commercial alternatives to reduce costs per flying hour of cargo transport to bases within U.S. Central Command; improving decisions about aircraft sustainment contracting; managing Army inventory during the drawdown in U.S. Central Command by avoiding unnecessary transportation, double handling, and materiel costs; and improving options for matching pay and benefits increases with what is required for maintaining a quality force—a major factor in overall costs.

We Analyzed the Effects of the Affordable Care Act and Are Helping States Implement the New Law

The U.S. Supreme Court's 2012 decision to uphold most of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)—most notably, the individual mandate that all Americans purchase health insurance or pay a financial penalty—has been called the most significant ruling on health care in U.S. history. RAND analysis on the effects of the individual mandate was widely cited in debate leading up to the Court's decision and is being used as federal and state governments move closer to implementing ACA provisions. In addition, RAND researchers have been working closely with decisionmakers at the federal and state levels to resolve many of the most critical program design and policy coordination challenges associated with implementing the ACA's sweeping reforms, including preparations for the insurance exchanges and the expansion of Medicaid. The significant and ongoing impact of RAND expertise in this area is a result of a tremendous and sustained effort by numerous individuals to transition the COMPARE microsimulation model—first developed at RAND to evaluate competing reform plans as they were being proposed four years ago—into a powerful implementation aid, capable of producing timely, policy-relevant assessments of a wide range of reform elements.

We Helped Louisiana Develop a 50-Year Coastal Risk Mitigation and Restoration Plan—a Model for Coping with the Threat of Climate Change

Some of the most valuable and productive areas of the United States are in low-lying coastal areas vulnerable to storm surges and flooding—challenges exacerbated by rising sea levels. RAND was instrumental in developing Louisiana's 50-year coastal risk mitigation and restoration plan, adopted unanimously in May 2012 by the Louisiana state legislature. The plan directs \$50 billion in investments over the next five decades to reduce flood risk and damage and restore coastal lands in a region that is home to one of the world's largest and most productive coastal ecosystems and vital to the United States' waterborne commerce, refinery capacity, wildlife diversity, and seafood harvest. The RAND team developed new ways of modeling flood depths and storm-surge risk, new decision-support tools and

information, and improved communication methods. Our interactive visualizations brought the analyses to life for planners, who then built a comprehensive communications strategy around the results to educate a broad array of stakeholders and decisionmakers about the robustness of the solutions offered. Researchers behind this effort are now aiming to use their expertise to help other vulnerable regions in the United States and around the world prioritize and reduce future flood risks and achieve greater resiliency to confront future disasters.

We Helped the Military Services Improve Their Suicide Prevention Programs

Over the past decade, suicides among U.S. military personnel have increased dramatically: In 2012, suicides outnumbered deaths in combat. RAND analysis revealing the differences in how the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force each approach suicide prevention led directly to a provision in the most recent Defense Authorization Act to reform prevention programs across the military and adopt a standard approach that reflects a RAND-identified set of best practices. RAND was an early voice in documenting the mental and behavioral health needs of today's generation of service members, and we have since developed a rich evidence base from which policymakers within the Pentagon, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and communities across the country can draw lessons and design more effective support programs and interventions. RAND's analyses in this area are sophisticated and of the highest quality, while at the same time practical and oriented toward providing decisionmakers with actionable recommendations for change.

We Developed a Plan for Managing and Disposing of Nuclear Waste That Has Become Part of Our National Strategy

Finding ways to safely store and dispose of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste has been a challenge on the American policy agenda for decades. In 2010, the U.S. Secretary of Energy created the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future to conduct a comprehensive review of policies for managing the final stage of the nuclear fuel cycle. The commission, which issued its final report in 2012, heard testimony from RAND that proposed a framework for evaluating the options based on safety, security, technical feasibility, and cost. RAND has since been working with the Department of Energy (DOE) to examine different models for a new organization focused on management and disposition that would achieve the critical attributes of accountability, transparent decisionmaking, insulation from political control, and organizational stability. In 2012, RAND's framework was incorporated into the Obama Administration's strategy. Based on this work and an earlier study on spent nuclear fuel policy funded through our program of self-initiated research, we expect to continue to advise Congress and DOE as new policies evolve in 2013.

We Are Helping Pave the Road to a New Economy in Iraqi Kurdistan

Over the past several years, RAND researchers have been working with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to lay a foundation for more effective policymaking across its various ministries and agencies. After being reduced to rubble during the reign of Saddam Hussein, the now semi-autonomous region has sought to rebuild a better society for its people. Central to its vision is diversification away from an oil-based economy. But planning has been hampered by a lack of basic data on the economy and on the health, education, and employment of the region's labor force. RAND researchers began with an

analysis of the needs of all the government ministries and identified the critical indicators that should be collected to enable policymaking in support of the regional economy. We recommended organizational changes in the Kurdistan Regional Statistics Office and proposed ways to improve its data collection infrastructure. We estimated future changes in the labor force and in the composition of the private sector in order to support civil-service reform and private-sector development. In 2012, much of this work was completed and many of our recommendations accepted. Our next step is to support implementation and rollout. This work is made possible by our expertise on good governance, process design, and organizational structure, developed through decades of research and analysis and client interaction.

Contributions like these start with research and analysis that is objective and of the highest quality, and culminate in outreach efforts to ensure that our findings and recommendations are known and understood by decisionmakers who need them. They draw on the strengths and dedication of the entire RAND family. As we look ahead, I see numerous policy areas where RAND is well positioned to make a significant contribution—helping government institutions around the world respond effectively to severe resource constraints; helping families and communities strengthen their preparation for disasters and their resiliency in the aftermath; helping new governments meet their transition challenges; strengthening initiatives to improve schools and student learning; and assisting the Pentagon with formulating defense strategy after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—to name just a few. I know I speak for all of us at RAND in saying that it's an honor and source of pride to pursue our mission of helping to improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis.



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